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**THE MINNEAPOLIS NEW
CAREERS PROGRAM:**

A FOLLOW-UP STUDY

BY

MARGARET A. THOMPSON

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

A. The New Careers Concept

Beginning in the summer of 1967, the Minneapolis New Careers Program was funded by the Department of Labor, drawing its legislative authority and financial muscle from the 1966 "Scheuer Amendment" to the Economic Opportunity Act. The program has been administered by the Community Action Program of Hennepin County's Mobilization of Economic Resources (MOER) Board.

The New Careers concept involves three somewhat independent goals or purposes. First, there is the goal of helping low income people enter the job market in an area of high demand and great social need, namely human service occupations. Secondly, the New Careers concept aims at improving services themselves by allowing the low income aide or worker to help the middle class professional relate to a variety of "minority" groups: e.g., the poor, the non-white, the alienated. Third, the concept implies the development of new careers - the creation of socially useful jobs at entry level with appropriate education and training allowing for advancement on the career ladder within the agency, or between agencies.

While these three major goals may appear somewhat unrelated, they are actually fused together by a pervasive goal: the restructuring of staffing patterns in human service agencies and institutions with accompanying changes in higher educational institutions, in order to achieve a relevant response to the unique education needs of those advancing in New Careers.

Frank Riessman and Arthur Pearl in their 1965 publication, New Careers for the Poor, provided the theoretical framework for the New Careers movement. Within this framework wide latitude was permitted in the design of experimental programs which implement the Riessman and Pearl objectives. In Minneapolis, the experimental model had two features that clearly distinguished it from other developing programs throughout the country: one is that from the first, the Minneapolis program was firmly anchored in an institution of higher learning, the University of Minnesota, where an experimental education component is being tested with the cooperation of the General College and the General Extension Division. The second distinguishing feature arises from the fact that the Minneapolis Public Schools had 115 of the 207 allotted job slots. This gave the program a strong slant on education as the new career field of emphasis. Diverse career opportunities in recreation, employment, corrections, care of the mentally retarded and mentally ill, however, were also significant in the Minneapolis program.

For the enrollee, the purpose of the program was to provide jobs with built-in career ladders, and academic credentials that would enable them to utilize these advancement possibilities. At the beginning of the program, enrollees were placed in human service agencies in entry-level positions. They were also enrolled in an educational component - for most, the University of Minnesota.

B. The Follow-Up Study

The program lasted a little over two years. After all had finished their period of enrollment, it seemed important to know what effect the program had had on them, if any. In an attempt to assess the outcome of New Careers, all enrollees who had been on the payroll for two full years as of December 31, 1969, were contacted and interviewed. In cases where no personal contact could be made with an individual, agency and University records were used to provide at least a minimal amount of information. The questions they were asked concerned the two major program components: the job and the education process. In addition, agencies were contacted to determine the kinds of commitments they had made.

The study group - those who completed two years - does not comprise the whole New Careers enrollee group by any means. Many people dropped out before they had completed their two years, for various reasons: to work full-time; to go to school full-time; for better jobs; because of legal problems; to join other Federal programs.¹ But it was felt that those who were in the program for two full years could be assumed to have received approximately equal amounts of opportunity. Further, the study was limited to this group because they are the only people who participated in all aspects of the program.

Four aspects of New Careers seem most important in terms of evaluation in a follow-up study. First, it is of value to know what kinds of educational experiences New Careerists had access to, the extent to which they were able to take advantage of them, and whether or not they continued their education after their two years with the program.

Second, it is important to look at the changes in kinds and stability of the jobs New Careerists held. One of the requirements of admission to the program was that the prospective enrollee had to be unemployed or underemployed. One of the main thrusts of New Careers was to provide employment in the human services for its enrollees. In looking at their jobs after they are no longer in the program, several aspects are significant² whether the jobs are in the human service field, whether they offer a living wage, and whether they provide some employment security.

Third, New Careers involved a commitment on the part of user agencies to employ enrollees on a permanent basis after their two years in the program. In a follow-up study, it is important to investigate the extent to which agencies fulfilled their obligations in this area.

Finally, it gave agencies responsibility for developing career ladders, so that enrollees would have access to higher positions in the agency as they gained experience and education. The extent to which agencies did this is another area of concern in this study.

CHAPTER II: THE EDUCATIONAL PICTURE

A. Enrollment in School

Of the ninety-two former enrollees contacted, slightly more than half (47) were still in school. In general, these people were those who were able to support themselves and to continue their education at the same time. They did this in one of two ways, with a few exceptions: some were able to arrange to be paid for full-time jobs with release time to attend school; others worked full-time and had their school expenses paid by scholarship or grant. A few were at school full-time, supporting themselves by loans and scholarships or part-time work.

Of those students who were not in school, many expressed a wish to return. However, they said they were unable to do so because they had to work full-time to support their families, and could not afford the time and/or money required. In most of these cases, if release time could have been arranged and school expenses paid, the enrollee would have been delighted to continue his education. As it was, financial responsibilities were prohibitive.

B. Accumulated Credits

These 47 former New Careerists had accumulated an average of 102.2 credits in a system which requires 180 credits for the bachelor's degree. The distribution of the students as to the credits they have earned is shown below:

<u>Number of Credits</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>%</u>
0-49	1	2.1
50-59	0	0.0
60-69	6	12.8
70-79	7	14.9
80-89	4	8.5
90-99	5	10.6
100-109	5	10.6
110-119	2	4.3
120-129	5	10.6
130-139	4	8.5
140-149	4	8.5
150-159	3	6.4
<u>Graduated</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2.1</u>
TOTAL	47	99.9

Over 60% of the students still in school have earned more than half the credits they need for a bachelor's degree.

C. College

Most New Careerists began their college career in the General College of the University - a two year college in the University system. Upon completion of 90 credits, an individual may terminate his education with an A.A. degree or transfer to another college to continue his education. The process of transferring takes several weeks, however, and many students with more than 90 credits are still technically in General College because their transfers have not been completed. At the present time, the students are distributed through the colleges in this way:

<u>College</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>%</u>
General College - U. of M.	27	57.6
College of Liberal Arts - U. of M.	5	10.6
College of Education - U. of M.	9	19.1
University College - U. of M.	4	8.5
Law School - U. of M.	1	2.1
<u>Augsburg College</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2.1</u>
TOTAL	47	99.9

D. Major

Many of the students have not made a firm decision about a major, but those who have are concentrated heavily in the human services area, as the following table shows:

<u>Major</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>%</u>
Social Welfare	10	28.6
Education	13	37.1
Sociology	9	25.7
Public Administration	1	2.9
Law	1	2.9
Park Administration	1	2.9
		<u>100.1</u>

Most of them have chosen to major in a subject which is directly related to the jobs they were placed in during their New Careers placement - Teacher Aides in Education, Counselor Aides in social welfare, and Park Aides in Park Administration, for example.

E. Degrees Received

Of the students who remained in New Careers their full two years, at least 28 earned college degrees - 23 earned the A.A. degree, 2 the A.L.A degree, 2 the B.A. degree, and 1 the B.S. degree in education. As can be seen from the accumulated credits listed above, about 10 more students can be expected to attain degrees at the bachelor's level within the next year or so. In addition, about 20 will be receiving the A.A. degree in that time.

Some students may have transferred out of General College before receiving the A.A. degree, and proceeded directly toward a bachelor's degree. Each of these degrees can be seen as a credential which can be used to gain access to jobs on career ladders or to further education. As such, they are concrete evidence of the ability of low-income students to complete academic coursework and advance through systems of upward mobility which are based on conventional credentialling.

In sum, former new Careerists whose financial situation permitted it - about half - are continuing the education they began on the program. Almost without exception, they are involved in the various fields of the human services - teaching, counseling, social work, administration. Those who are not in school generally wish they were, and attribute their non-attendance largely to financial problems.

CHAPTER III: THE JOB SITUATION

A. Employment Prior to New Careers

To get an accurate picture of the kinds of jobs former New Careerists hold now, it is necessary to know their employment situation before they joined the program. Of 92 persons contacted, nearly one-third received their main financial support from AFDC; another one-third were self-employed at a level so low that they qualified for a poverty program. A total of 50 persons - over half- were receiving some support from public assistance sources before they joined New Careers. The following table shows New Careerist's means of support prior to joining the program.

<u>Main Source of Support</u>	<u>Number of Persons</u>	<u>%</u>
Self	29	31.5
Persons other than self (spouse, parents)	4	4.3
Combination: Self and other (AFDC, Soc. Sec., etc.)	12	13.0
Combination: Spouse and other (V.A., Soc. Sec., etc)	2	2.2
AFDC	30	32.6
Social Security, pension, V.A.	7	7.6
No response, other	8	8.7
	<u>92</u>	<u>99.9</u>

Excluding the former enrollees who were unemployed and/or on AFDC before they joined New Careers. The average hourly wage of the group was \$1.98. Many in the group were paid \$2.00 an hour for part-time work as teacher aides in the public schools. For these persons, annual earnings were very low- usually, low enough to enable the person to receive AFDC as well. But even for those who worked full-time, the average wage produced an annual income of less than \$4,000. Added to these minimal earnings was the problem of unstable and irregular employment due to lack of education, poor access to jobs with any mobility built into them, a fluctuating job market, and other contingencies. In general, these people were among the most vulnerable in the job market.

Most New Careerists were not in jobs concerned with the human services before they joined New Careers. Rather, they were employed wherever they could get work. Their lack of educational credentials and marketable skills forced them into jobs that could be learned quickly by almost anyone - and this included very few human service jobs.

It was the design of the New Careers Program to place these individuals in human service jobs that would be permanent and provide some security and opportunities for upward mobility based on increments of experience and education.

B. Present Employment

The present employment of former New Careerists is a complex situation. Most are employed in one of four arrangements:

1. working full-time
2. working half-time and attending school half-time with school expenses paid by the Career Opportunities Program (COP)
3. working half-time and attending school, with expenses paid in some other way
4. working half-time but not in school

The former enrollees who are employed, are distributed through these four categories in this way:

<u>Extent of Employment</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>%</u>
Full-time	50	63.8
Half-time (COP)	21	26.2
Half-time, in school (other)	7	8.75
Half-time, not in school	<u>1</u>	<u>1.25</u>
TOTAL	79	100.00

Of ninety-two persons contacted, only 13 (14.1%) were not working. Of these 13, five were in school at the University full-time; the other eight were neither employed nor in school. As far as could be determined, only two enrollees were receiving AFDC, and one of these was enrolled in the WIN (Work Incentives) program to enable her to finish her educational program on a full-time basis.

The kinds of jobs held for former New Careerists are shown in the table below:

<u>Type of Job</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>%</u>
Minneapolis Public Schools		
Teacher Aide I- $\frac{1}{2}$ time/COP	2	
Teacher Aide I -full-time	7	
Teacher Aide II- $\frac{1}{2}$ time/COP	17	
Teacher Aide II-full-time	21	
Teacher Aide II- $\frac{1}{2}$ time	1	
Counselor Aide II- $\frac{1}{2}$ time/COP	1	
Counselor Aide II-full-time	1	
Social Work Aide I- $\frac{1}{2}$ time/COP	1	
Social Work Aide I-full-time	1	
Social Work Aide II-full-time	7	
Consultant - full-time	1	
Teacher - full-time	<u>1</u>	
	61	66.3

<u>Type of Job</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>%</u>
Counselors, other than Public Schools		
half-time	3	
full-time	<u>4</u>	
TOTAL	7	7.6
Other Human Service Work		
half-time	3	
full-time	<u>5</u>	
TOTAL	8	8.7
Law Enforcement		
half-time	1	
full-time	<u>1</u>	
TOTAL	2	2.2
Non-Human Service (full-time)	TOTAL	
	1	1.1
Unemployed		
in school	5	
not in school	<u>8</u>	
TOTAL	13	14.1

The average hourly wage earned by New Careerists at the present time is \$3.14, an increase of over \$1.00 an hour from the enrollee's pre-program wage. This hourly increase represents a considerable increase of income when the additional factors of job stability and greater amounts of full-time employment are taken into account. In this group, all enrollees who work for the Minneapolis Public Schools have a guarantee of steady and permanent employment. Those who are on the Careers Opportunities Program have a promise of full-time employment when they want it, with promotions for further education. And some enrollees in other agencies are now employed as Civil Service personnel and are therefore assured of continuing work.

In effect, at least 71 persons are self-employed on a full-time basis with a promise of continuing employment. This compares to 29 persons who were self-employed before the program; and the quality and stability of the jobs is much improved.

In sum, the employment picture for New Careerists who remained in the program a full two years has gone through a dramatic change. Wages are higher; jobs have much more built-in advancement possibilities; positions are permanent; and some agencies permit release time for school.

CHAPTER IV: AGENCY COMMITMENTS: JOBS

A large component of the New Careers Program was a commitment on the part of agencies to provide permanent full-time jobs for enrollees upon completion of the program.

In an attempt to evaluate whether this commitment had been fulfilled, a survey of agency placements was conducted. * Two counts were taken: how many slots the agency had originally provided; and how many New Careerists were still employed by the agency as of March 1, 1970. The results are shown in the table below.

Employment Stability

	<u>Column 1</u> Assigned	<u>Column 2</u> Still Employed	% Still Employed
Minneapolis Urban League	2	1	50%
Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights	4	1	25%
State Department of Human Rights	6	0	0%
State Department of Employment Security	10	5	5%
U. of M. Agricultural Extension Service	12	1	8%
Family and Children's Service	2	1	50%
Minneapolis Housing Inspection Bureau	6	2	33%
Anoka State Hospital	6	0	0%
Minnesota Department of Corrections	8	2	25%
Minneapolis Park Board	2	1	50%
Minneapolis City Workhouse	4	1	25%
Minneapolis Police Department	5	1	20%
Westminster Day Care Center	6	2	33%
SUBTOTAL	<u>73</u>	<u>18</u>	
TCOIC	54	2	4%
SUBTOTAL	<u>127</u>	<u>20</u>	
Minneapolis Public Schools	<u>171</u>	<u>91</u>	53%
TOTAL	298	112	38%

* These data were collected by Fred Amram and the staff of Project HELP at the University of Minnesota.

The table shows that, were it not for the Minneapolis Public Schools, the percentage of New Careerists still employed in the agencies to which they were assigned would be very low. While it is true that in some instances New Careerists voluntarily left their agencies, for the most part permanent job opportunities simply were not provided by contracted agencies.

TCOIC (Twin Cities Opportunities Industrialization Center) was listed separately because it was initially a major employer of New Careerists. Serious financial and contractual complications caused the termination of almost all TCOIC New Careers employees.

The Minneapolis Public Schools have also been listed separately from the other agencies because they were the largest New Careers employer and because they retained a very large proportion of New Careerists. It should be noted that the Minneapolis Public Schools offered even more contracts than indicated in Column 2 of the table. However, a number of New Careerists chose full-time attendance at the University of Minnesota instead.

In sum, a little over one-third of the enrollees were still employed at their original New Careers agencies as of March 1, 1970. It can be noted, however, that many enrollees were able to locate satisfactory jobs in other agencies (see Chapter III: The Job Situation). Others are attending school full-time to get credentials that will enable them to get jobs on the open market.

CHAPTER V: AGENCY COMMITMENTS: CAREER LADDERS

The idea of "career ladders" in the New Careers program had several parts. It was suggested that jobs being done by professionals could often be done, at least in part, by paraprofessionals who could relate to the clients or patients in a more fruitful way than the professionals themselves. Further, the New Careers concept was aimed at providing new careers - careers which were not in existence prior to the program but could be created to fill gaps in the pattern of services that were being rendered, or to respond to human needs in more creative ways than the present ones. And finally, New Careers was to provide ladders on which enrollees could advance as they gained experience and education. In other words, the new careers should be connected with those that had already existed and enrollees should be able to make a steady climb through paraprofessional to professional positions as they gained academic credits and years of experience.

In the area of career ladders, one agency - the Minneapolis Public Schools - provided a notable example of a workable career ladder system for paraprofessionals. The system included steps which were of progressively more difficulty, and had pay increments for each step. The ladder has consistently been used for New Careerists who are still employed by the Minneapolis Public Schools, and some are on the highest rung. They will become teachers upon completion of their teaching certificates.

Some other agencies had career ladders in theory, but failed to implement them in practice when the opportunity arose. This was because of various situations in agencies and in the program. Perhaps one of the most important reasons for it was that New Careerists were never seen by some agencies as permanent, full-time employees. Further, some agencies did not find the New Careers concept practical or useful for their particular kinds of operation on a long-term basis, so they felt no commitment to the development of career ladders except for some or all of the New Careerists at the agency. The Minneapolis Public Schools, on the other hand, saw the likelihood of an on-going program of the New Careers type; so it seemed profitable to develop a workable career ladder for the enrollees of that program.

In some other agencies, an enrollee could advance in the agency through the structure that existed before he came, but no new career ladders were provided. In some cases, this was because the tasks in the agency were perceived as being capable of no further segmentation. In others, it was because some career ladders had already been created for people without the usual credentials, and no new ones were seen as necessary. Enrollees in these agencies did have job mobility, but the long-term benefits of changes in the credentialing system were notably absent.

There was a great deal of variation in the numbers and kinds of career ladders that were created, and in their durability over time. In some respects, this variation is a function of the size of the agency and the number of different kinds of personnel it is able to employ. In turn, this revolves around the complexity of the tasks the agency performs, and the ease with which those tasks can be segmented. In larger agencies and those with tasks which can be broken down into a large number of segments, it could be predicted that career ladders

would be more likely to be implemented, since larger numbers of paraprofessional personnel would have to be classified, paid, and given job responsibilities. The sheer problem of bookkeeping in an agency like this could be expected to lead to some sort of job classification and advancement program.

In a smaller agency, and/or one with a less complex set of tasks to perform, it could be predicted that more informal and less permanent arrangements for classification, pay, and job assignment would be found. In this type of agency, relationships between persons and tasks are likely to change more frequently and more readily, and be more responsive to the personalities and preferences of individuals. Often, the job description is virtually non-existent in these agencies, and may bear little relationship to what the individual actually does.

The size of the agency and the complexity of its role have important effects on the creation and implementation of career ladders for paraprofessionals. It appears that if permanent career ladders are seen as an important goal of a New Careers program, it can be best reached by placing enrollees in large agencies with complex tasks which can easily be broken down into components. If, on the other hand, a flexible, short-term job experience for individual enrollees are sought, it seems likely that they could be created most easily in smaller agencies with less complex tasks. At the same time, agencies with more bureaucratic structures should not be assumed to be rigid and unresponsive simply on that account. It is often the case that the small working units of large bureaucratic organizations have as free-wheeling and flexible an organizational structure as do smaller organizations themselves. In fact, according to the Minneapolis experience, some large, bureaucratic organizations can provide both a permanent system of career ladders and a set of flexible work situations which can be tailored to fit the needs of individual enrollees.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSIONS

A. The Evaluation of New Careers

It is clear that New Careers can be thought of and evaluated in two different ways: as a training program, its function is to help enrollees gain the education they need to get jobs, and to provide the jobs. The effect of the education and jobs, ideally, would be to enable enrollees to hold steady, permanent jobs after their support from the program had ended.

In evaluating New Careers as a training program, the researcher looks at how much education enrollees actually received and what type it was, whether they are able to continue in their education, what kinds of jobs they have after the program and what their earnings are.

In these terms, the Minneapolis New Careers Program can be seen as a successful one. Enrollees finished about half the credits for a bachelor's degree on the average; they are generally in the fields of human service; and about one-half are still in school even though the program has ended. There was a substantial improvement in the average wages the enrollees earned, as well as a more steady form of employment for most. Viewed as a route by which low-income people's lives can be bettered, one by one, New Careers is successful. The question of whether the "system has been changed, however, is still not answered. Is it any easier for more low-income people to have steady, profitable work because of New Careers, or would they have the same arduous path to follow if they started today?

In answering this question, the view of New Careers is that it is intended to be an agent of social change. In this function, it should act upon institutions of higher education and agencies to change them in such a way that they would be more responsive and accessible to low-income people. The criteria for evaluation here are much more abstract, but it is more likely that the extent to which New Careerists are still on their jobs and career ladders are present in agencies are at least indicators of the changes that have taken place in the larger social system. In both cases, the accomplishments are discouraging: very few agencies retained many of their New Careerists, and all but one failed to develop and implement career ladders. It appears then, that New Careers acted to provide access for low-income people as they presently exist, but was not as successful in changing the paths of access to those systems.

More responsive to change as a result of the experience with New Careerists has been an institution of higher education, the University of Minnesota. For detailed discussion of changes in response to low-income students as represented by the New Careerists, see the study "New Careerists In Higher Education" by Edward C. Knop and Margaret A. Thompson. *

* Available in mimeo form from the Office of Career Development, University of Minnesota.

B. Recommendations for Future Programs

On the basis of the Minneapolis New Careers Program, several recommendations can be made as to ways in which other programs might be designed to better reach the goals they set:

1. Arrangements should be made with agencies to provide permanent jobs for enrollees after the program's end. (More details on this can be found in Part I).
2. Agencies and/or universities should permit enrollees release time and/or scholarships for education after the program's end. This enables the enrollees to become an independent agent in the job market, able to get jobs on the basis of credentials.
3. If one of the goals of the program is to change the credentialling system, agencies should be required to provide career ladders and to implement them.
4. Agencies with large bureaucratic structures are more likely to establish career ladders and implement them than smaller agencies. They are also able to provide innovative placements on some occasions.
5. Agencies will be more responsive to providing career ladder and permanent jobs for enrollees if they have financial incentives, particularly when the economy is strained. These could come from the Federal government, or from other levels of government.

APPENDIX: FOUR CASE STUDIES*

I. Mr. R., age 50. Employed: Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights.

Mr. R. enrolled in the New Careers Program in November 1967. His educational training varied: receiving 10 years at Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia, and Dunwoody Institute in Minneapolis.

His work experience before New Careers was constant but varied in nature. He worked 13 years as a laborer on construction and played in a small band in the evening to supplement his income.

He remained in the New Careers Program mainly to achieve an AA degree and to retrain. A serious back injury in February 1966 had led him to believe he would not be able to work again. But the program met most of his needs, restoring him to activity. He is presently working for the Department of Civil Rights as an Assistant Investigator of Complaints for persons being discriminated against in the areas of employment, housing, and social involvements.

II. Mr. P., age 35. Employed: Minneapolis Boy Scouts.

Mr. P. enrolled in the New Careers Program in October 1967. His previous occupation was his own business, and his main reason for remaining in the program was to complete his education. He feels he could not have completed his education without New Careers.

He is now working as an Executive Director of the Minneapolis Boy Scouts, which serves 700 youth on the Northside and several thousand throughout the state.

III. Mr. B., age 46. Employed: Minneapolis Education Association.

Mr. B. is a high school graduate. He worked as a retail salesman at a hotel and in the evenings as a waiter for 10 years. He worked for 12 years at Northern Pacific Railway as a waiter. His main reason for staying in the New Careers Program was to get a long-sought education. He received his AA degree in 1969 and is still continuing at the University of Minnesota. He had tried for many years to get further education, but couldn't do this until New Careers came along. His reasons were 10 children and holding a full-time job. He is presently attending the University full-time and working full-time in order to meet the needs of his family. He has 130 credits in a social welfare curriculum. His job is the Executive Director of para-professionals of the Minneapolis Education Association.

IV. Mr. M., age 36. Employed: Federal Narcotics Rehabilitation Program, Catholic Welfare Association.

Mr. M. enrolled in the program in 1968. Prior to the program, he had received an eighth grade education. His main reason for remaining on the program was that he was taking courses at the University of Minnesota in relation to his work. The job he now holds is an assistant for the Federal Narcotics Rehabilitation Program administered by the N.A.R. act of 1966. He is very satisfied with this job, as he feels he is working in a very worthwhile area.

* Excerpted from Hennepin County Office of Economic Opportunity News Letter, November, 1970.